

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Appl. No.: Confirmation No. 9031  
Applicant: William R. Hooks et al.  
Filed:  
TC/AU: 4422  
Examiner: Alissa L. Hoey  
  
Docket No.: 04050.0024.5  
Customer No.: 30166

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Sir:

Applicant has filed the instant Continuation Application of Serial No. 09/972,013, filed October 5, 2001, now pending. This is a Preliminary Amendment.

If any fees are required for this Preliminary Amendment, Applicant requests that this be considered a Petition therefor. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required to Deposit Account 09-0528.

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 2 of this paper.

**Amendments to the Specification** begin on page 4 of this paper.

**Remarks/Arguments** begin on page 5 of this paper.